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THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIBES OF THE ADEN PROTECTORATE

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The CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Hamilton is a Political Officer, following in the great tradition. He knows the needs and the minds of his Arabs, and he also will tell us, and indeed emphasize, what a Political Officer should know before he goes among them.

At the same time the Council feels that this tribal question stretches far beyond Southern Arabia into India, Africa and other parts of the British Empire. This, therefore, is the first of several lectures on backward tribes. We hope very much to get as much information as we can on this subject, and we trust that Political Officers who are not able to come to these lectures will give us the benefit of their experience in writing, so that we may put their views in the Journal. Naturally one's inclination is to hedge round these tribes, if it were possible, but there is no question that as time goes on they must be fitted in to the civilized world. The study of their ancient social organizations and of their heritage is absolutely necessary, so that, if it is possible to collect as much information as is available, we may perhaps induce the powers that be to take a line which will protect them from exploitation by civilization, by big business, and possibly by their more advanced neighbours.

THE organization of the social classes in the small area of the Aden Protectorate is complicated. Few people have given much thought to it, and those who have, have usually erred in accepting generalizations.

In the organization one may still trace the ancient divisions of the territory as it was some two thousand or more years ago. It was then divided into four main states, which we can call kingdoms: that of Saba, which is supposed to be the ancient Sheba, in the Yemen; Qataba in south-east Yemen; Ma'an, a confederation ruled by the "Grand Council," between Eastern Yemen and Hadhramaut; and the kingdom of Hadhramaut.

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To-day the territory is occupied by the descendants of the ancient people and split into many independent tribes. These tribes are all endogamous and are markedly distinct in appearance. But scientifically it would be difficult to name the distinctions, as they are all of the same race type. There is, however, a sufficiently marked distinction between the two main types to attract the attention of the casual, but interested, visitor to the country. These types are to be distinguished by their own local names, the Yemeni and the Mushreqi, the latter name coming from the ill-defined district of the Mushreq, which applies to the territories east of Yemen proper and does not include the tribes east of the Kathiri of Wadi Hadhramaut.

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The Yemeni type are those bearing Sabaean names and Qatabanian names. These remain to be classified from names in inscriptions. It is sufficient to quote such names as Yafa', Qateib and Beni Saba.

Yafa' was the name of an ancient tribal deity, the centre of whose worship seems to have been the ruin of Am'Adia, in what is now the territory of the Audhali confederation, a very recent confederation of tribes. Yafa''s followers had a mausoleum at the holy city of Shabwa. They are now represented by the tribe of Yafa', one of the most eastern of the Yemeni tribes.

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Qateib is the diminutive of Qatab, and we may translate it as the "remnant of Qatab." The present Qateibi tribes—"the wolves of Radfan," as they style themselves—form the centre of the war-like Ja'ud confederacy some sixty miles north-east of Aden; Beni Saba, Beni Himyar, etc., need no explanation. The Mushreq type bear un-Yemeni names. The centre of the whole type is the 'Aulaqi confederation. The word "'Aulaqi" is derived from "'alq," the spark of a camp-fire, and has little interest. But the confederation is ruled by the tribe of Ma'an and the "Grand Council of Ma'an" is called to this day when any one of the three chiefs of the confederation is to be elected. Of this type are all tribes east of the Yafa'i border and of the Eastern Yemen plateau.

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In colour of skin, a light chocolate-brown, and in hair, both types are very similar, but there the similarity ends. In features, as in dress and in many customs which do not concern my subject, they are distinct from one another.

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The tribesman class is the aristocratic, landowning class, and has been so for many centuries. They form 70 per cent. of the total population of the territory. All inter-tribal politics emanate from them. They form the background of the community's life. I have mentioned this class first for several reasons, but principally because we are used to a landowning aristocracy being in a minority. Here they form the majority. Having been for so many years controllers of their own destinies, the one landowning, fighting class and by far the most powerful class in the community, their insistence upon their rights to-day is understandable.

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The tribal Chiefs are in three main categories—the appointed Suzerain, the accepted Suzerain and the elected hereditary tribal Chief. It will be simplest to deal with these three types of Chief in turn, giving examples of each.

In the first type, the appointed Suzerains, we can take as examples H.H. the Sultan of Lahej and the Amir of Dhala'.

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643 425 The Sultan of Lahej rules over the territory of the 'Abdali tribe, and his frontier marches with the northern frontier of Aden Colony. He is descended from a Yafa'i family, who were appointed as Governors of Lahej by an Imam of San'a. Later they revolted against the Imams and declared their independence. By purchase, Imamic grants and seizure they own a considerable portion of the Lahej lands; they are of foreign origin to the tribe over which they rule.

The Amirs of Dhala' were appointed Governors of the Dhala' province, including the lands of the tribes of Halumein, Ahmad, Azraq and Shu'Ar, by the Imamas of San'a, and, later, of the lands of Sha'ib by a Sultan of Turkey. I see that the official handbook describes the Amirs of Dhala' as descendants from slaves. It is surprising how such obvious inaccuracies persist. To see that they have no slave blood in them requires no more than ordinary eyesight, and it would be impossible for an Imam of San'a to appoint a slave to any post, since there are no slaves in the Yemen at all, slavery being forbidden by the tenets of the Zeidi sect. The Amirs are of typical Central Yemeni type, such as is found on the Yemen plateau.

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643 Later, they rebelled against the Imams and established their independence. Thus they rule over a confederation of small tribes, while belonging to none of them.

These appointed Suzerains, of whom the Sultan of Makalla is one, form a distinct class among Arab Chiefs. They do not mix with their tribesmen in the usual democratic Arab way, but stand apart, as it were, and are addressed by titles of exaggerated respect. Not being tribesmen of the tribe they rule, they have no traditional and family holds over the people and their attitudes towards their tribesmen are those of foreign rulers. They do not, as a rule, favour elected hereditary headmen in their villages, but prefer to appoint outsiders as headmen, whom they pay as retainers.

When a Suzerain dies, the election of the new Chief is held by the family only and the tribesmen are not consulted.

622 792 The accepted Suzerains are represented by one example only—the Sharifs of Beihan. It is, however, an interesting example.

628 648 In Beihan there are settlements of Sharifs and of Seyyids. There are also two tribes among whom these holy men live. Both the Sharifs and the Seyyids are arms-bearing families, and for some time were divided by a feud. Before the Great War, the elected Chief of the Sharifs, a far-sighted man called Ahmad, negotiated a treaty of protection and friendship with Great Britain. In this he gained the support of the lower tribe and of half the upper tribe, which was divided by a feud. After the Great War he concluded a truce with the Seyyids, and consolidated his relationships with his supporters among the tribesmen, who amounted to three-quarters of the population of Beihan. They accepted him as Suzerain and as their general agent for dealing with their foreign affairs. Thus, while he is undoubtedly a Suzerain, he is one of limited authority. He does not claim taxes from the land or the trade except in his own settlements, and is, consequently, very poor. But, for all that, the influence of the Sharifs is considerable in all the Beihan area. Their position is not, of course, unique in Arabia, but it is doubtful if any others than holy men could find themselves in a similar one.

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The elected hereditary tribal Chiefs form the third type. In each tribal confederation there is a central tribe. Of this central tribe one family only provides Chiefs to the confederation. Normally the election of a Chief is the concern, not of his family only, but of the central tribe, while powerful petty Chiefs of other tribes within the confederation have a considerable say in it. Such Chiefs are, by virtue of the conditions of their election, truly democratic. By ancient tradition, however, they are held in great respect and are referred to invariably, as is their family, as the "Dola," or dynasty. They are accorded high-sounding titles by the Government and by other Chiefs, but their tribesmen address them by their names, and it would appear that the high-sounding titles are of recent adoption in the country. The Imam of San'a rarely uses them. Government correspondence is, for this reason, often a source of merriment.

It will be seen that all Chiefs are, whatever their type, elected in a greater or lesser degree—the Suzerains within their family circle and the hereditary Chiefs within their tribe. The main difference between the types is that, whereas the Suzerains are of foreign descent to the tribes over which they rule, the hereditary Chiefs are of the tribe and, as such, do not need to surround themselves with the trappings of imposed authority. In appearance the Suzerains are more imposing, and this has misled officials into supposing that they are of more consequence socially than other Chiefs are. This is, of course, not so.

In all these types of Chief, when the Chief dies his eldest son would appear, by custom, to have less right to succeed than others. Suzerains always try to impose their eldest or their favourite son as accepted heir during their lifetimes. This has happened in Lahej, where it led to a revolt among the Sultan's relations, and in Makalla by arrangement. The Sharifs of Beihan have been exceptions to this, and have abided by custom. When Sharif Ahmad died, they held discussions among themselves. The eldest son was Sharif Hussein, but he was appointed Regent to his own eldest son, a young boy, who was elected Sharif. The reason given for this was that the grandson of the dead Chief had longer to live than his father and that frequent change in leadership was a bad thing. As a rule, however, Chiefly families pass the Chiefdoms from branch to branch, and, when the Chief dies, a nephew will usually succeed. Among the 'Audhali recently, the Chief was murdered by his cousin. The tribe was split in two by feud, but one half elected the murderer's son, a boy of eight years old, to the Chiefdom. This boy was accepted in 1934, when the feud ceased, as Sultan of the tribe.

We next come to the holy classes. The first of these are the Sharifs and Seyyids, the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. They live in settlements and elect among themselves in each family a headman. They have great influence in the community, but it varies, of course, with the amount of their riches. Most Seyyids—the only Sharifs are those in Beihan—do not bear arms and take no part in tribal warfare. They are peacemakers, and derive considerable income as such, and as dispensers of the Sharia or holy law of Islam. They are treated with veneration and respect and, after death, are frequently treated as saints. They marry

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tribeswomen and the daughters of Chiefs, and many own land and are given tithes of other land by ancient right.

The other holy class is that of the descendants of the saints, for so they claim to be. Almost every village in the territory has its saints' tomb, a white rectangular building with one or more domes. Some of these tombs are of great age, and many I suspect to be pre-Islamic. Within the shrine these older structures are similar. There is a modern wooden rail pierced by a door. Beyond this is a long plaster sarcophagus in the shape of a roughly surfaced mound, sometimes as much as twenty feet long or more. Within this the saint or the prophet is supposed to be buried. Names, however, give an indication that it is not always an Islamic saint. Such names as Mola Matr, or Master of Rain, are of great interest, and it is a pity that such shrines have been adopted into Islam and not saved for archæology.

Each shrine is maintained by public subscription, in the form of tolls on travellers and gifts to reinforce prayers. Many shrines also own land or receive tithes from land. They are guarded by families who use the title Sheikh and who claim descent from the original saint. The best description for these families is that of "Holy Sheikh." In most cases the saint is considered a miracle worker, and this power may descend upon the Holy Sheikhs as well. This fact in itself is sufficient to give the Holy Sheikhs considerable influence, and they inspire respect and fear. I would stress the question of fear, for it is important. The buried saint and, to a certain degree, his supposed descendants are credited with the power of doing bodily and personal harm, such as depriving of sanity, striking with blindness, destruction of crops and the like. They are, in effect, witch-doctors, and are feared more than are the Seyyids, since they are considered to be dangerous men. Most go unarmed. Occasionally they arm and join in feuds and tribal wars, but such Holy Sheikhs lose much of their power.

In this class one may put the attendants at the shrines of Prophets. They cannot claim to be descended from the Prophets and therefore they are not personally capable of working miracles. Consequently they have little influence in public affairs. The Prophets buried in the Protectorate include Job, or 'Aiyub, as he is called, whose tomb is near Dhala', and Sha'ib, the supposed father-in-law of Moses, who has several tombs. We must also include those peculiar men who watch over the abodes of Jinns and spirits. They are not supposedly capable of working miracles, but they are held in awe for their spooky associations. There is a famous Jinn who resides on the headland of Ras Imran, near Aden. His attendants are all of one family, who are treated by the people similarly to the attendants of a Prophet's tomb.

All those Holy Sheikhs, whether descendants of saints, attendants at Prophets' shrines or Jinns' abodes, are called Sheikhs, and each family elects its own headman. They are frequently confused with Sheikhs who derive their titles from elected headmanship of tribal sections and of villages. While some saints are undoubtedly of Islamic origin, most are, I suspect, of very ancient origin, and all, whether saints, Prophets or Jinns, receive the same honours. A day in the year is set apart for their

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Ziarra, or visiting day. Early in the morning of that day the attendants unfurl the saint's flag, if he has one, and process with it, followed by the people, to the door of the shrine. Here the people dance and hold a fair, while many go in and put their requests to the saint, firing a salute outside the door and paying a present in money or in kind to the head Sheikh. Once inside, they kneel by the tomb and whisper their requests to it, saluting the tomb with a kiss. They then leave and are entertained with a cup of coffee-husk tea at the door or in the outer court.

Such shrines have another value to the community—they are the only form of poor-relief in the land. Poor travellers will always stop at saints' shrines for the night, and they are never refused entertainment. When travelling in the country oneself it is often a good thing, for this reason, to give a present to the local saint rather than to a petty Chief, and I frequently did so. The political effect is good, and one avoids causing the jealousy among petty Chiefs which is so frequently occasioned by the passage of a political officer.

In the Mushreq there is a class of men who are hereditary and appointed judges. They are probably the remnants of the legal system of one or other of the ancient kingdoms, and, by their situation, I should say of Ma'an. The Chief of these is the hereditary judge or Manqad (plural, Manaqid). The derivation of the word is from the root NQD, meaning "to pick out or investigate." He is elected from a certain family. The family itself has great influence in local public affairs, but only its elected head styles himself a Manqad, and he has the title of Manqad Al Manaqid, or "Judge of Judges." Once elected he himself, without consulting anyone, appoints four or five other Manqads. He does not appoint them from his own family, but from outside, and his choice is not limited to any class or tribe. One, recently appointed, was from the Dha'if class, who are not aristocrats and whom I shall presently describe. These men are known as Manqads and perform the duties of a final court of appeal. Their judgments are given according to the widest possible code, which they describe as "Asharia, Al 'Ada and Al Haq," or "The Holy Law, tribal custom and the Right." Once having put his case to a Manqad, no tribesman would either withdraw it or refuse to abide by the Manqad's decision. To do so would be to forfeit his tribal honour by committing a great shame. Consequently their judgments in disputes are only sought when all other courts have failed.

When a Chief Manqad dies and a new one is elected by the family, the appointments of all other Manqads is suspended until they are confirmed by the new Chief Manqad.

Manqads dress as poor men. They do not carry arms, and behave with great humility. They are treated by the tribesmen and the Chiefs with great respect. There is little doubt as to which part of their code they prefer: it is Al 'Ada, or tribal custom, and they have a fund of ancient folklore which should not be neglected by the anthropologists. They will do everything they can to maintain custom among the tribes, even when to do so is not to their own personal advantage. Recently one of them discovered that a guest of his, whom he had just entertained for a few days in his house, had previously committed a flagrant breach of

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693 tribal customs. He at once took out of his house everything this guest had
671 touched—carpets, matting, blankets, cooking-pots and the like—and burnt
or destroyed it all. His action in so doing was so deeply felt by the guest's
77 own family that they shot him within the week. Had any Chief chosen
626 a similar way of showing his disapproval it is doubtful if the guest's family would have looked upon the matter with such concern and would probably have accused the Chief of insulting them.

365 This completes the upper classes in the community, the Chiefs and
631 tribesmen and the holy men of various types. The picture, then, is of a community ruled over by three types of Chief, split into smaller tribes each ruled by its headman, and again split into villages under a village headman. Among them move the Seyyids, descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, and the descendants of saints, the servants of Prophets' tombs and of the abodes of Jinns, each electing their own headman within their own families and all, in a varying degree, landowners or tithe-owners.

565 We now come to the landless classes. These have been in the past
463 incorrectly grouped under one heading as Raya, or peasants. We will
465 therefore take the true Raya class first. It is small and is composed of
421 those men who farm land not as tenants but as paid farm-hands. The
792 Scottish "grieve" is an example. They have no land or houses of their own, the produce of the land belongs entirely to the landowners, who give the Raya pay for their labour in cash and kind. The landowner is often a distant saint or Prophet. Thus, for example, a saint may, by ancient custom, receive a tenth of the crop on a tribesman's land, but from his own land he receives all, and the Chief of the Holy Sheikhs will remit a certain amount in return for the peasant's labour. This distinction has frequently led to misunderstandings when political officers have investigated accusations of robbery against Chiefs. It frequently occurs that one farmer is paying the tenth allowed by the holy law to a Chief, while the other next door is paying, say, 70 per cent. On the surface it seems very unequal treatment, but it will usually be found that the first farmer is farming his own land and paying taxes, while the other is of the Raya class, farming the Chief's own land and receiving pay.

421 Where districts have retrogressed through loss of control on the part of
565 the Chief, the greatest care is needed when one is setting up control again to see that the tribesmen are confirmed in their lands and that the Raya do not suddenly pretend that they are tribesmen, in an endeavour to secure land which is not theirs, and that Raya do not change service against their will during the settlement of land disputes. Although a small class they are an important one, and few officials have given sufficient study to their social position.

565 Their origin is a puzzle. They are of the same race as the tribesmen
144 and can bear arms. They are probably descended from remnants of tribal sections who have lost their land in war or who have been compelled to sell it.

565 Very similar to these Raya are the agriculturists of the Dha'if class.
463 The Dha'if is a large class and differs from the Raya in that they are not entirely landless peasants, but are also landless shopkeepers and artisans. Those who work as peasants are distinguished from the Raya in that they

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do not remain for any length of time on one plot of land, but take up all kinds of casual labour as well as farm labour. Among such one may find carpenters, gunsmiths, builders and tradesmen. The manufacture of indigo dye, with which the Mushreqi tribesman dyes himself and his clothes, and the sale of indigo-dyed cotton is, to a large extent, in their hands. Large families of this class are to be found throughout the territory in the market towns. Unlike the Raya, they do not bear arms.

The Heiq class is almost indistinguishable from the Dha'if, but there is a distinction in that the Heiq can be described as the lower third of the Dha'if class. That is, that the whole class of artisans and casual labourers can be described, in a generalization, as Dha'if, but the poorer, unskilled casual labourer is of the Heiq class. As an example, a rich shopkeeper is Dha'if, but, because of his possessions, is not Heiq. It is not a very important distinction. Dha'if in Arabic means "weak." I am unable to discover the derivation of Heiq, but we can take it to mean "of low quality."

The Asakar, or hired soldier class, are a class in themselves. They are of two kinds—freed slaves still in the service of their master and tribesmen who have lost their lands and their status and entered the service of their Chief. Once this happens to a tribesman, he or his descendants can never return again to the status of tribesmen, but remain ever afterwards Askari, whether they still serve master or not. They have dropped below the aristocratic classes and can no longer intermarry with tribesmen. I have heard of no exceptions to this hard rule.

The next class is that of the Doshan, plural Doashin. I can find no derivation to the name. They are of two kinds—wandering singers and dancers, and settled singing-men who have attached themselves to a particular tribe. Their origin is a mystery. The wanderings ones, who give the most dismal performances of what they call dancing, can always be driven out of camp. It is best, however, to be polite to the settled ones. They are skilled versifiers, and those who treat them with contempt must submit afterwards to unmerciful lampooning. On public holidays in up-country towns one of them frequently appoints himself as Amir Al 'Id, or "Amir of the Holiday." Supported by his friends and anyone who wants some fun, he calls upon the local Chief and demands a present and entertainment. This the Chief refuses, and receives an ultimatum challenging him to war in a few minutes. The war which ensues is conducted for the most part with fireworks, blank ammunition, water and balls of dung. The Chief's fort is the centre of attack. Eventually the Chief will ask for a truce, ambassadors are exchanged and all ends in an entertainment and a present to the "Amir." At other times they will institute rhyming competitions, or will compose and sing long Qasidas on the local political situation. Some of these settled Doashin become men of mark, but they have, for all their poems and lampoons, little effect on tribal policy and no say whatever in tribal affairs.

Slaves need no introduction. The slave trade in the south is dead, but the descendants of Abyssinian slaves still serve their original masters. It would be absurd to free them; they are completely free, but slavery is their only niche in the community. Take that away and they would be homeless and workless. As in the rest of Arabia, except the Zeidi Yemen,

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they are a race apart and are much respected, frequently attaining positions of high rank. A man will trust his slave before his brother. Tribesmen will eat with a slave when the slave has attained a position of eminence, such as governor of a village or commander of a post, but never with a Doshan or with a Heiq. A Chief's responsibility for his slaves is a very real one, and should he sell a slave or part with one he will be considered to have committed a shame. The slaves that I have met in the territory upheld the reputation slaves have always had for loyalty and courage.

We next come to two curious races, the Akhdam and the Hajur. I am satisfied that these are quite separate races, although there are a few instances of intermarriage in the major settlements. Akhdam is the plural of Khadim, which means "servant." This race is of African origin, but I can make no guess at the date at which they came to Arabia. Whenever it was, they appear to have left no relations or traces behind them in Africa. Their main settlement is at Zabid in the Western Yemen. They are of the Shafa'i sect, but practise witchcraft, make phalli and hold snakes and snake-charmers in great respect. In appearance they are small and their skin is a dull dark brown, not a glossy East African black. The only race in the country which will do filthy work, the Akhdam are in great demand and are employed as sweepers. They have their own headman in their small communities, successful wizards appointing themselves to the post without election.

The second foreign race is the Hajur. They appear to be South-west Abyssinians and are very like the Galla. Like the Akhdam, they have long ago lost any linguistic connection with Africa and speak Arabic. They are hardy and well-built and live in grass-hut settlements on the coastal belt between Lahej and Abyan. Some, on occasion, bear arms, but they are on the whole un-warlike and seek casual labour at harvest time. The 'Abdali tribes of Lajeh have intermarried with them to a considerable extent, and for this reason the 'Abdalis are darker than most coast Arabs and many villages in their territory are occupied by settled Hajur. In a few generations the Hajur and the 'Abdali will be indistinguishable, and I think this mingling of the two races must be very recent, and probably began during or just before the Turkish occupation of Lahej in 1916.

East of Aden, for some hundred miles, the coastal fishing communities are of Hajur or mixed Hajur stock. They elect their headmen as the Arabs do and are of the Shafa'i sect, but, like the Akhdam, they incline towards witchcraft and phallic worship. The observant traveller on the Lahej road will see plenty of evidence for this close to their settlements.

It is possible that these two African races came to Arabia during the second and third centuries A.D. as camp-followers to Abyssinian armies. But this is pure conjecture.

Finally, we come to the Jews. Jewish settlements exist all over the Protectorate. The principal settlement is in San'a, and all Jews of South Arabia claim inter-relationship and have many family connections in Palestine. They claim to be descended from the Jews of Kheybar. It is more probable, however, that the original Yemeni Jews are of South Arab race. Before the rise of Islam the people of South-west Arabia were

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Christians, Jews and worshippers of the many local gods. There was a Christian bishopric at Najran, and a strong settlement of Jews in Jauf. The Jews survived the rise of Islam, religious affinities have attracted to them a certain amount of northern blood, but to-day there is little apparent difference physically between them and the tribesmen of the Yemen: their features are similar; the colour of the skin is only a little lighter, which may be accounted for by the Jew being less exposed to the weather.

Certain laws are imposed upon the Jews by the Arabs. Where, as in the Ja'ud tribes, there is no real Chief, the law becomes custom. They must dress in a particular kind of smock; they must wear their hair in ringlets, hanging down either side of the head in front of the ears; they must not wear a turban; they must not build houses of more than one storey in height; they must not carry arms.

The Jews are perfectly content to abide by these customs. They own no land and their only stock is chickens, but they are, comparatively, skilled artisans, jewellers and metal workers. They have a corner in such trades. Moreover, they pay only the most nominal of taxes, their houses are rent free and no man's hand is against them. To kill a Jew is a great shame, greater even than killing a woman. The Arab leaves the Jew to his religion, and he would not dream of attempting to coerce one into working on the Sabbath, however urgent the matter was. The Jews of the Yemen, therefore, live in great security. They appoint their own heads and run their own schools. Their women are unmolested, their taxes small and their profits great. Few of them, in my opinion, even wish to leave the Yemen, but are more than content to remain. In the capital of Yemen, San'a, the Imam deals with business concerning the Jews through their own head entirely and treats them with every consideration and respect, and his example is followed by his Governors and by Chiefs of the Protectorate. They are a contented, hard-working community. From enquiries I have made I would say that their numbers are fairly static and that there is little danger of a Jewish population problem arising in the near future.

These complete the list of classes and races settled in the Aden Protectorate. Time limits my description to a mere sketch, and I have confined myself to permanent settlers and not to those different types with which the political officer may at times have to concern himself. South Arabia is still a pilgrim route, and I have several times met travellers from the Persian Gulf and Oman and as far afield as Baluchistan, journeying on the hard road through the country to Mecca. I have not described the Somali or Dankali coast traders, nor the sailors.

It will, very soon, be necessary to correct the existing handbook or to publish a new official manual about the country. While there were a few political officers of long residence in the Protectorate such a manual was unnecessary. We all learnt on our own. Now not only has the political staff been increased, but Air Staff Intelligence Officers and Army Intelligence Officers are beginning to travel in the country. The country is being opened up and it is essential that officers who have to travel in it should make a close study of its people, their ancient social organization,

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their laws of land tenure and their systems of agriculture. At present those officers who have the inclination to investigate these complicated matters seldom have the time to make that investigation a thorough one. It must be added that such knowledge cannot be obtained through interpreters, but that the investigator must have a very fair knowledge of the spoken and the written language. Such things as deeds of ownership must be examined in the original, and the investigator must have a good knowledge of the language and the history of the people to enable him to form a judgment on an original document or to spot a forgery. A colloquial knowledge of the language is insufficient. My own knowledge is insufficient, I hope others will add to this short summary.

Sir BERNARD REILLY: I think we would all agree that Mr. Hamilton's description of the tribes of the Aden Protectorate has been very interesting and very informative. To my personal knowledge he has a very intimate acquaintance with the tribes of the Aden Protectorate, has done much valuable work for them, and has moved about among them, not merely as a Political Officer representing the Government, but as a friend, with the result that he has acquired a knowledge of their customs and feelings, of their prejudices, their likes and dislikes, and their hopes, which can come only from people who are willing to confide in a man whom they recognize as a friend.

The description that he has given of the social structure that exists amongst those tribes shows what a big task we British have undertaken in that part of the world. Aden itself, upon which the Protectorate is based, is, of course, a British Colony, and is governed as such. It is not now entirely Arab; it has become a cosmopolitan port and is peculiar to itself. But the colony is very small. It is only about eighty square miles, and beyond it stretches this large area of the Aden Protectorate, which, including all the mountainous and desert parts which lie within its borders, covers an area of over 100,000 square miles, and is about the same size as the United Kingdom.

That is a very large area, and in that area we are committed to a policy of what is known as indirect rule—that is to say, we are determined not to annex the country, but merely to protect it, as far as lies in our power, from foreign intrusion, and to give it the assistance of our guidance and help in its own self-development. It is not an easy task, because we do not wish to do anything which will denationalize these people or in any way stop them from being what they are—Arabs. We do not want the impact of our Western civilization to harm them or lay them open to exploitation, but we do want to give them the benefit of our help and of our experience in trying to adapt themselves to this contact with the ouside world which has become inevitable in modern times. I think many of them, if we asked them, would probably prefer to be left as they are, to have no interference from outside, but that is difficult in these days. There is now no country that can remain completely isolated from the outside world. The extension of communications, the development of air travel, and other factors make contact inevitable, and so these people, living in the social state which Mr. Hamilton has described, which has in many cases

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remained unchanged through centuries of the past and which was perhaps well suited to periods long ago, somehow or other have to adapt themselves to modern conditions.

That is the problem which Political Officers in a country like the Aden Protectorate have to face: that is to say, they have to give the best that we can offer to the people without doing at the same time harm, which so obviously might accompany our action if we were to press our own ideas too much on a social system so different from our own. That makes it all the more important—in fact, it is essential—that British Officers, Political Officers working in that country, should really understand the people as Mr. Hamilton understands them; that they should study them and specialize in their task, for otherwise it is only too easy to fall into serious errors and mistakes.

The question which remains to be answered is to what extent communities like these tribes can absorb or adapt themselves to these changes and to the conditions which they have to meet. As you know from what Mr. Hamilton has said, the units are very small. In some cases, such as Lahej and Mukalla, we have something approximating to what we regard as a regular government. But in some tribal areas the authority of the sheikh is very small; in fact, in some cases I think Mr. Hamilton would agree that it is practically non-existent. The tribal chief often has little real authority. He is merely one of the family, one of the tribe. The extent to which he can carry his authority depends largely on his personality.

We have also heard how the tribesmen, the landowning tribesmen, who regard themselves as the aristocracy of the country, are not a minority but a majority of the people. I once was talking to an Arab from the Protectorate, and I asked him: "What exactly is the difference between a tribesman and a subject?" He replied very briefly: "Well, a subject has to do what he is told, and a tribesman need not." If the tribesmen are in a majority, that makes it very difficult. I said to him: "What about your own tribe? Have you many subjects there or not?" He replied: "As a matter of fact, in my own particular tribe we have no subjects; we are all tribesmen, and that is what causes all the trouble."

If we want to help these people in matters like assisting them to develop their agriculture, to develop their resources in water (which is a necessary concomitant of any agricultural development), to give them help in medical matters (of which they are badly in need, for there is no such thing as even an approach to a medical service in any part of the Protectorate), to help them in education—I mean an education suitable to them—the first and foremost foundation must be some form of internal security. With so many of these small tribal communities immersed in old vendettas and blood feuds the security in the country is in some parts very slight. You cannot build up anything on a basis of anarchy and disorder, and the question arises whether these small tribal units are capable of establishing enough authority and of getting rid of anarchical conditions sufficiently to meet the needs of the time.

Our neighbour there, the Imam of the Yemen, maintains that many of these tribes are too small to enjoy any forms of independence. He says, in fact, that they ought to belong to him, and he would understand how

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to rule them because he has a government, which is true. He says that our policy of recognizing them as small independent units, and according them rights as such, is a mistake.

However, we are committed to that policy. We have treaties with them promising them protection, and we intend to maintain these treaties. So we have to face the question of how to promote progress and development and the benefits that we feel we can confer on communities which are so divided and in many cases under such a very flimsy form of authority.

Perhaps Mr. Hamilton could say what he thinks on this point.

Mr. HAMILTON: I think that it is useless to bring in any sort of progressive service, as Sir Bernard Reilly says, until peace has been made. It sounds easy enough to make peace. The men are intelligent and very poor, and they know that their feuds and war hurt them and no one else; but it is not so easy as all that, and the trouble is tribal honour. "If I make peace first, my honour has gone." You are up to the neck in that.

There is a way of making peace, and that is if your Political Officers are sufficiently numerous and well enough known; one man cannot be in three or four different mountains at the same time, and when he is going from mountain A to mountain B, mountain A goes on the rampage again. I do not see why some of these Political Officers should not be Arabs who know the country sufficiently well and can get down to conferencing, and so approach the matter from that angle of tribal honour.

The first argument will be: "No, nothing will induce me to make peace. That man killed my uncle." Then you say: "Suppose a really strong government came and made you make peace, like the Imam's Government or us?" He will say: "What can I do against a strong government?" You say: "Here is the big government. I am it." I do not think you will have much need to use force. The less force used, the better. I think force can be used in quite small parties on the ground, recruited from the tribes themselves in most cases, and not by imported troops.

On that basis I think you can make peace, and it is being made already very much on that basis in the Hadhramaut. Once that peace is made these men are perfectly capable of working up not only to a progressive form of society, but eventually, in my opinion, to self-government.

I have taught Scottish soldiers to use the machine-gun, and have also taught Arab soldiers; when I came to teaching ballistics and ballistic formulæ for night shooting, I found the Arab learnt in a week, while the Scottish soldier took ten weeks and more.

Once they are given pacification the Arabs will forge ahead.

I said to one fellow: "You Arabs are all mad."

He replied: "Oh no, we are not, but some time ago our house fell upon us and now we are struggling under the ruins of it."

I asked: "What can you do about it?"

"Nothing," he answered, "because we are inside. But you are outside. You can make a hole in it."

"What sort of a hole?" I enquired.

"Security," he answered. "You force security down our throats and we will thank you for ever."

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But, of course, we do not force things down anybody's throat. 000

Colonel J. K. Tod: It is forty years ago since I spent some time in Aden. The lecturer said that the Mushraqis were rather darker than the western people. My recollection is that they were fair and aquiline compared with those further west. 142

You spoke about the shrines of ancient saints being very much revered. At the west of Dhala there was an object of great veneration. 778

My impression in those days was that the tribes of the Aden Protectorate were extremely democratic and had very little class distinction. The only distinguishing mark was in their dress. The ordinary tribesmen wore indigo-dyed clothes, giving them a very dirty appearance, because the dye always came off all over their bodies, and the better classes wore white with coloured head-dresses. They seem to have commanded the respect of the people, who showed it in a very peculiar way. A tribesman would come up to one of his sheikhs, who might be sitting on a rock, and by way of showing him respect he would catch him by the head and pull it down and kiss him on the head. It seemed to be the ordinary respectful greeting. 181 291 576

You mentioned the eastern confederacy, the Qataban. Is the present tribe the Quteibi? They were one of the confederacy under the Amir of Dhala. My recollection is that that is the only confederacy in the whole Protectorate. It was a very loose confederacy. 619 631 643

Mr. Hamilton: The Yafai people are western. They are not of the western Mushraqi type at all. The Yafais are a very fine lot. There are, I think, two battalions of Yafai soldiers in Hyderabad under the Nizam. They travel all over the world, but they will not let anyone else travel over *their* world. The Amir of Dhala is the chief of the confederation over which he rules, which does not actually include the Quteibis. A political mistake was made originally by trying to put the Quteibis under him. Now, when you put them under Lahej, they say they would rather be under Dhala, and *vice versa*. They have the greatest fun the whole time. Their idea of fun is to shoot and loot each other. When the R.A.F. drop a couple of bombs, usually well wide of their villages, they take the unexploded bomb at once, pick it up, carry it off, put it under a neighbour's house and set fire to it. [144]

Kissing at the top of the head is most respectful, but, of course, there again in South Arabia you kiss the hem of the man's garment one minute and put a knife just where you have kissed the next. But they are extremely respectful, and the chiefs do carry with them the whole honour and self-respect of the tribe. 576

If in battle one of the chiefs is killed, it is very much regretted, and the whole tribe turns out to bury him. Also the son of a chief and his headmen of villages will indulge in the kiss on the thigh and knee, salutes accorded originally to patriarchs.

Mrs. Gregory: Is there any connection between the people from Baluchistan Makran and the Mushraqi?

Mr. Hamilton: I do not think there is any connection except that a few travellers come across from the Persian Gulf.

Dr. Hugh Scott (unable to be present) asked Major Hamilton (in writing) whether he considered the confederation of Ma'an to be the 101 174 619

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remnant of the Minæan State. Dr. Scott asked whether the names MA'AN and MA'IN were from the same root. He remarked that the ruins of Ma'in lie in the district of Jauf, roughly seventy to a hundred miles north-east of San'a, and that Ma'in and other remains in the vicinity had been regarded as the centre of Minæan culture. If this were so, the descendants of the Minæans are now a long way south-east of their ancient centre. He was particularly interested in this question because it seemed to him, when summarizing recently such information as is available on the pre-Islamic states of South-West Arabia, that there had been a tendency for states or kingdoms to move in succession in a southerly direction, either under pressure of invaders from the north or in search of better, less arid, country.

Major HAMILTON replied (in writing) that, while it would be risky to attempt too positive an answer in the present state of knowledge, his views were as follows:

"The names MA'AN and MA'IN are from the same root and, I fancy, refer to the same people. The name of the Transjordanian district of Ma'an, near Medāin Sālih, is the same word. I think you are certainly right in supposing that the trend of all peoples in the peninsula has been from north to south, whether in search of better land or—which seems more likely—because of pressure from the north.

"The rise of Saba will have been at the expense of other kingdoms, and I think the assumption is justified that the Sabæans forced Ma'an out of Jauf and also out of the district of Wadi Harib, near Beihan, from which several inscriptions referring to the 'Grand Council of Ma'an' have been collected; and that the remnant of the Minæans, if any, is to be found south and east of their original place. They could not have gone south-west because, by the time Saba became powerful, Qataba appears to have held the south-western spurs of the Yemen mountains and to have owned both Harib and Beihan. My own opinion, on the existing evidence only of modern tribal names and distribution, is that Ma'an was swamped by later rivals and is earlier than the other kingdoms. It is interesting that the name Ma'an is borne by the central tribe of a confederation with such marked peculiarities as the 'Aulaqi, in just the place where one would expect to find it. I think, therefore, that these Ma'ani 'Aulaqis are the remnant of the Minæan State forced from Jauf, and perhaps from further north, by the rise and the southward march of more powerful neighbours, and that they were eventually swamped in the struggles for the important 'Beihan Triangle.'"

Major Hamilton expressed the hope that the map accompanying his lecture entitled "Six Weeks in Shabwa," to be published shortly in the *Geographical Journal*, would show the very great local importance of that little triangle of territory (since published in Vol. 100, No. 3, September, 1942, pp. 107-123).

From the above it seems that Major Hamilton's views are in accordance with the usually accepted chronology—namely, that the Minæans were the oldest of the South-West Arabian kingdoms named, and were succeeded (but not entirely obliterated) by Saba and Qataba. These two were in part contemporaneous. (Later, Himyar became predominant.) It also appears that Major Hamilton considers the movement of peoples to have been from

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north to south, not only in South-West Arabia, but in the peninsula as a whole. Incidentally, while the name MA'AN is not given on some maps, it is printed on the folding map at the end of Wyman Bury's *Land of Uz* (1911). It is there placed just above the eastern end of the Qaur ranges and below the words "Upper 'Aulaqi."

The CHAIRMAN: What a remarkable experiment in Empire building has been exposed to us this afternoon. The thought that is uppermost in my mind is how absolutely essential it is that not only we should have very carefully selected Political Officers to carry on this experiment, but that they should be most carefully instructed in what they have to expect before they take up their duties. That seems to me to be of the utmost importance.

You will agree, I know, that we have had a most happy and fortunate send-off to the beginning of our tribal lectures. Indeed, Mr. Hamilton, we were more than happy and lucky to have you. Then, too, we had Sir Bernard Reilly with his great experience, both of them masters of their subject. We thank you too, Sir Bernard, for what you have told us.

May I ask you now to thank Mr. Hamilton most sincerely for his admirable lecture.

A demand for this lecture, together with the discussion, has led to this reprint.